



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Apostle Islands National Lakeshore
415 Washington Avenue
Bayfield, Wisconsin 54814-9599

IN REPLY REFER TO:

F5419 (APIS)

March 3, 2006

Memorandum

To: User Fees Mailing List and Other Interested People

From: Superintendent, Apostle Islands National Lakeshore

Subject: Announcement of Recreational User Fee Proposal

I am pleased to transmit to you the long-awaited proposal for recreational user fees at Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. The details are in attachments to this message and I will point out the highlights here:

- NPS proposes to implement recreational user fees for the following park uses:
 - Overnight camping (\$10-20 per site per night)
 - Overnight docking (\$10-20 per boat per night)
 - Parking in some locations (\$3-5 per vehicle per day, annual rate available)
 - Guided tours and interpretive programs (\$3-5 per person, family rate available)
- Entrance fees are not being proposed, although there will be an opportunity to show your support for the park by purchasing a tax-deductible “*Voluntary Apostle Islands Passport*” from the Friends of the Apostle Islands which you can display on your boat or car
- The NPS recreational user fees, if approved, will be implemented in 2007. The Voluntary Passports will be available starting in 2006.
- 100% of the recreational user fee revenue will stay at the Apostle Islands, and be targeted for high priority repairs and upgrades to park campsites, trails, docks, and historic structures. The Friends have committed the revenue from the first year’s sales of Voluntary Passports towards the exhibits and furnishings for the historic Raspberry Island Light Station, expected to re-open to the public in 2007 after a major restoration.
- This is a proposal, open to public comment for approximately 30 days, through April 4, 2006.
- There will be three public meetings where you can discuss the proposal with park staff and get your questions answered.

Many of you have told us that boaters who do not make landfall should not be subject to fees, and after lengthy deliberations, we have come to the same conclusion, though not necessarily for the same reasons. Evolving guidance for standardized national park entrance fees do not appear to allow for the flexibility we believed necessary to accommodate the different types of use that this park receives. The long delay in this announcement resulted from months I spent trying to negotiate a lower and more flexible entrance fee rate schedule for the Apostle Islands than those standards would have permitted. Rather than go at this time with rates I felt were inappropriate, we're not going to propose entrance fees. We'll stick with the recreational user fees, which most people seemed to be much more comfortable with in any case.

Quite a number of people told me over the past year that they understood the financial needs of the park and were willing to contribute if they could do so voluntarily, and in particular, if it could be done on a tax-deductible basis. I am pleased to announce that the Friends of the Apostle Islands, working closely with us, have come up with a solution. A *Voluntary Apostle Islands Passport* will be sold widely for a donation of \$30 or more.

We will accept comments on this proposal until April 4, 2006. Letters can be mailed to my attention at the address above, e-mailed to APIS_Superintendent@nps.gov (please note the underscore, and please put the word "FEE" in the subject line), or provided to park staff in person at any of our offices or at one of the public meetings.

Public meetings will be held on March 15 at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center outside of Ashland, March 16 at the Bong World War II Heritage Center in Superior, and March 21 at the County Courthouse in Washburn. All locations are in Wisconsin, and all meetings will be from 5 to 7 pm. Information, handouts, and park staff will be at the meetings, but there will not be any formal presentations or testimony. You are welcome to come at any time during the two hours.

Thank you for your patience and I look forward to your comment on this proposal.

/s/ Bob Krumenaker